

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BUJUMBURA 0769

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, BY, KN, KS, PORG

SUBJ: DISCUSSION OF MULTILATERAL ISSUES WITH BURUNDI

FOREIGN MINISTER

REF : (A) STATE 220772, (B

(6BA53 220773, (C) STATE 180074,

(D) BUJUMBURA 749, (E) STATE 222269

SUMMARY: WHILE BURUNDI AND THE U.S. STILL REMAIN AT OPPOSIT POLES ON THE KOREAN QUESTION, BURUNDI FOREIGN MINISTER MELCHIOR BWAKIRA, WHO PLANS TO LEAD THE BURUNDI DELEGATION TO THE 31ST UNGA, SUGGESTED A SOFTENING OF PAST BURUNDI STRIDENCY IN SO FAR REFRAINING FROM CO-SPONSORSHIP OF THIS YEAR'S PRO-NORTH KOREAN RESOLUTION. HE ALSO CONFIRMED THAT FOR THE TIME BEING BURUNDI WAS NOT JOINING THE CUBAN EFFORT ON PUERTO RICO. HE EMPHASIZED THE ECONOMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE COLOMBO MEETING AND ON SECRETARY KISSINGER'S NEGOTIATION EFFORTS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA HE WAS VERY SKEPTICAL ANYTHING COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED. END SUMMARY.

1. BURUNDI DELEGATION TO UNGA: AT MY MEETING SEPTEMBER 9, WITH BURUNDI FOREIGN MINISTER BWAKIRA FOR A PRE-UNGA DISCUSSION OF VARIOUS MULTILATERAL QUESTIONS, HE SAID THAT HE WOULD BE LEAD-
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ING THE BURUNDI DELEGATION TO THE UNGA ALTHOUGH DATE OF DEPART-

URE AND COMPOSITION OF HIS DELEGATION WERE NOT YET FIRM (HE PROBABLY WILL NOT BE LEAVING IN ANY CASE UNTIL AFTER THE TRIPARTITE SUMMIT MEETING IN RWANDA SEPTEMBER 18-19, ALTHOUGH THE EMBASSY HAS JUST LEARNED THAT ORIENTATION MINISTER BIZINDAVYI MAY LEAD THE DELEGATION NOW THAT PRESIDENT MICOMBERO HAS CANCELLED OUT FOR UNSPECIFIED MEDICAL REASONS). HE SAID HE WAS SCHEDULED TO MAKE HIS UN SPEECH ON OCTOBER 2. AND HE PLANNED TO TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON AROUND OCTOBER 9-10 FOR AN ORIENTATION VISIT.

2. COLOMBO NON-ALIGNED MEETING: I ASKED BWAKIRA FOR HIS OPINION CONCERNING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE COLOMBO MEETING (BUT NOT EXPECTING TO GET MORE THAN A CURSORY REPLY SINCE HE DOES NOT STRAY FROM THE OFFICIAL BURUNDI POSITION AND EVEN THEN THE PRATICE IS TO SAY AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE TO ENQUIRIES). BWAKIRA SAID THAT THIS HAD BEEN THE THIRD NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT MEETING HE HAD ATTENDED AND THAT DEFINITELY THERE WAS A CHANGE IN THE COLOMBO ATMOSPHERICS SINCE SOME OF THE OLDER ISSUES CONCERNING COLONIALISM WERE NO LONGER PERTINENT. THE POSITIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS WRE, HE THOUGHT, THE PROPOSALS IN THE ECONOMIC REALM BUT THE POLITICAL SIDE HAD BEEN SO ENORMOUSLY DIVISIVE AND DIFFICULT THAT LITTLE COULD BE SAID TLHAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUERY ABOUT BURUNDI'S RESERVATION ON THE PURETO RICO RESOLUTION (REFTEL B), BWAKIRA SAID IT HAD BEEN ON THE GROUNDS THAT BURUNDI HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED IN ADVANCE ON THE PROPOSED RESOLUTION. HE WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT THIS HAD NOT BEEN A HOT ISSUE AT THE CONFERENCE AND ALSO BURUNDI WAS WILLING FOR THE MOMENT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE U.S. PROOISE THAT THE PEOPLE OF PURETO RICO WERE BEING GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THEIR WISHES OF SELF-DETERMINATION. BUT HE EMPHASIZED, THE KOREAN QUESTION WAS ABSOLUTELY ANOTHER THING, FOR IT HAD BEEN A LIVELY ISSUE AND HERE NORTH KOREA HAD BURUNDI'S FULL SUPPORT FOR ITS PROPOSED RESOLUTION. HE DENIED, HOWEVER, THAT BURUNDI WAS A CO-SPONSOR OF THE PRO-DPRK RESOLUTION OF THE 31ST UNGA AND INDICATED BURUNDI HAD NO PLANS FOR THE TIME BEING TO BE ONE. COMMENT: SINCE THE LAST STATEMENT REPRESENTED A FAIRLY SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE FROM PAST PRACTICE, I DOUBLE CHECKED IT WITH THE NUMBER TWO IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WHO CONFIRMED THAT BURUNDI HAD MADE NO DECISION ON CO-SPONSORSHIP. WHEN PRESSED FOR REASON, BOTH MEN SHRUGGED AND SUGGESTED

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CO-SPONSORSHIP WAS NOT THAT IMPORTANT. AN ADDITIONAL FACTOR ON THE PUERTO RICO QUESTION WHICH MAY HAVE WORKED IN OUR FAVOR IS THE GRB'S ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN ASSISTANCE FROM CUBA FOLLOWING THE MPLA VICTORY IN ANGOLA HAS FRIZZLED BADLY FROM APPARENT LACK OF FOLLOW THROUGH ON BOTH SIDES.

3. THE KOREAN QUESTION: WE HAD A LONG DISCUSSION OF THE KOREA ISSUE IN WHICH I TRIED TO EXTRACT FROM BWAKIRA A BURUNDI

DEFINITION OF NON-ALIGNMENT THAT COULD POSSIBLY JUSTIFY THEIR EXCEPTIONALLY ONE-SIDED APPROACH TO THE KOREA QUESTION. BWAKIRA INSISTED THAT EVEN IF NORTH KOREA HAD DEFENSE TREATIES WITH THE USSR AND CHINA, THERE WAS NO CONTRADICTION WITH A NON-ALIGNED POLICY; BURUNDI SUPPORTED, HE SAID, THE FREE CHOICE OF A PEOPLE AND THERE WOULD BE NO FREE CHOICE AS LONG AS U.S. TROOPS AND WEAPONS WERE PRESENT IN SOUTH KOREA. THE KOREANS SHOULD, HE ADDED, BE FREE TO DETERMINE THEIR OWN FUTURE. IN THIS CASE, ASKED, WHY DID BURUNDI SUPPORT A PROPOSAL THAT INTENDED TO EXCLUDE THE SOUTH KOREANS FROM SETTLEMENT TALKS ON KOREA'S FUTURE. ON THIS HE WAVERED AND HAD NO ANSWER, SUGGESTING WITHOUT CONVICTION THAT PERHAPS SUCH TALKS WERE POSSIBLE. I ALSO ASKED BWAKIRA IF IT WAS REALLY OFFICIAL BURUNDI POLICY TO CHARACTERIZE, AS DID ORIENTATION MINISTER BIZINDAVYI (REFTEL D) THE PANMUNJOM INCIDENT AS AGGRESSION AGAINST THE NORTH KOREAN PEOPLE IN AGREEMENT WITH STATEMENTS MADE BY THE NORTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR HERE. BWAKIRA DENIED THAT THIS WAS WHAT BIZINDAVYI HAD SAID; HE CLAIMED (INCORRECTLY) THAT BIZINDAVYI HAD SPOKEN OF BURUNDI'S CONCERN ABOUT ANY AGGRESSION AGAINST THE PEOPLE OF KOREA. I SAID IN ANY CASE IT WAS HARD TO UNDERSTAND A STATEMENT ABOUT AGGRESSION AGAINST THE PEOPLE OF KOREA WHEN THE INCIDENT IN QUESTION OCCURRED IN THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE AND INVOLVED THE KILLING OF TWO AMERICANS. I WENT OVER THE TALKING POINTS GIVEN IN REFTEL B, PARTICULARLY STRESSING THE LAST TWO WHICH POINT TO PANMUNJOM AS AN ADDITIONAL JUSTIFICATION.

COMMENT: BWAKIRA WAS FRIENDLY (MORE SO THAN USUAL) THROUGHOUT THIS DISCUSSION ON A TOPIC WHERE THE U.S. AND BURUNDI ARE ON OPPOSITE SIDES, GIVING ASSURANCES AT THE BEGINNING AND END THAT HE IS ALWAYS WILLING TO LISTEN AND TO READ THE MATERIALS ON A QUESTION THAT WE PROVIDE HIM. BEHIND HIS POLITE ATTENTION AND ONLY HALF HEARTED EFFORT TO EXPLAIN BURUNDI'S RATIONAL, HOWEVER, CONFIDENTIAL

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THERE LIES AN UNSPOKEN PREMISE THAT BURUNDI IS PRO-NORTH KOREA AND THAT'S THAT. BUT ANOTHER SMALL POSITIVE ASPECT FOR OUR SIDE IS INFORMATION THE EMBASSY POLOFF HAS LEARNED SEPARATELY THAT BURUNDI OFFICIALS HAVE PRIVATELY BEEN QUITE DUBIOUS ABOUT THE RECENT BARRAGE OF NORTH KOREAN EMBASSY PROPAGANDA AND PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENTS CLAIMING THE U.S. WAS STARTING A WAR IN KOREA; THEY REASON THE U.S. WOULD NOT START A WAR IN AN ELECTION YEAR.

4. SOUTHERN AFRICA: I GAVE REFTEL A TALKING POINTS ON THIS SUBJECT, A BRIEF REVIEW OF PART OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S PHILADELPHIA SPEECH, AND THE LATEST INFORMATION AVAILABLE ABOUT FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS. I ASKED BWAKIRA HOW THE GRB FELT ABOUT THESE EFFORTS OF THE SECRETARY TO SEEK A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. WHILE PHRASING IT MORE ELABORATELY, HE REPLIED IN EFFECT THAT

BURUNDI HAD NO OBJECTIONS TO THE EFFORTS BUT WAS HIGHLY SKEPTICAL THEY WOULD SUCCEED ON ANY OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN QUESTIONS. BURUNDI FELT, HE SAID, THAT THE POLICY OF APARTHEID WAS THE BASIC QUESTION AND FORCE SEEMED THE ONLY ANSWER. HE WAS ALSO CRITICAL THAT THE U.S. HAD NOT PUT GREATER PRESSURE ON SOUTH AFRICA IN THE UN.

5. OTHER QUESTIONS: THERE WAS NO TIME FOR ME TO RAISE OTHER SPECIFIC ISSUES EXCEPT A GENERAL MENTION OF OUR HOPE THAT CONFRONTATION TACTICS OF THE UNGA WOULD NOT BE AT SUCH A HIGH PITCH AS TO PRECLUDE OR RENDER IMPOSSIBLE NEGOTIATIONS ON CRUCIAL ISSUES AND A PLUG FOR A JOINT INSPECTION UNIT FOR UN AGENCIES. APPRECIATED DEPARTMENT'S PROMPT RESPONSE (REFTEL E) TO REQUEST FOR GUIDANCE ON UN VETO AND ANGOLA MEMBERSHIP; MERCIFULLY BWAKIRA DID NOT BRING THEM UP.
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